

Maynard Finance Committee
Zoom Meeting ID: 820 3893 8699
Final 1/25/21

Present: Tom Black, Elliot Bruce, Peter Campbell, Ken Estabrook (Chair), Alannah Gustavson, Kelly Kane, Jillian Prendergast (Vice Chair)

Absent: None

Others: Greg Johnson, Natasha Rivera, Lydia Clancy, Mary Brannelly, Brian Haas, Wayne White, Colleen Andrade, concerned citizens

All relevant documents available on board docs.

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm. Ken went over the legal remote meeting notice. This meeting was not recorded.

Ken went over the agenda for the meeting.

Ken shared the January 11 meeting minutes on the screen. Tom motioned to approve, Elliot seconded. Vote 7-0 to approve.

Chair Updates

Ken provided some context for the discussion with the School Committee and staff being at this meeting.

Meeting with Maynard School Committee/Maynard Public Schools (MPS) Administration

Ken turned the meeting over to the SC and MPS Administration should they have wanted to present anything. They did not have a formal presentation; we proceeded directly to questions/discussion.

Tom asked if there were still CARES monies left that could help with a budget shortfall between the SC budget and the TA budget. There is still approx \$300k available.

Ken shared the MPS Budget Update document from 1/15 on screen.

Lydia noted that students are going to need extra help being brought back post Covid. Lydia clarified for Tom that the \$21,181,456 budget number is just to meet their contractual obligations. Brian noted that since this document, Greg has added some to their budget. Brian recognized that the original ask of \$21,829,456, which added positions, may be too much for this year. Tom asked what the approx \$253k in "Help with special education increased expenses" pays for and Brian explained. Wayne also pointed out that the town has no control over tuition increases in schools that students are outplaced to.

Eliot asked if they had a breakdown of what it would cost to make the SPED programs more expansive and what that would potentially save. It wasn't clear this was available.

Natasha added that some of the SPED increase is to help bring students back up to speed post covid.

Wayne explained the Circuit Breaker program for SPED costs. SPED expenses go above what is in the operating budget. Circuit Breaker helps offset the differences. Circuit Breaker only goes up by about 2-3% each year, and expenses out pace it. The reimbursement rate also fluctuates between 60-75%.

There was discussion about some programs the schools are doing, like Oasis and Tiger programs to help keep students in the district.

Elliot started a discussion about Prop 2 ½ and the difference between that 2 ½ percent increase and the historic increase of the education budget being generally around 4%. Discussion about an override and its implications ensued.

Mary brought up the Pathways programs to try to keep kids in the district instead of going to charter schools. Brian spoke to other programs in place for this reason as well.

There were some clarifying questions on line items in the shared document. Kelly asked for an explanation for the significant increase in salaries if there are no new positions. Brian and Wayne will research and get back.

Natasha explained that enrollment numbers were down and they are anticipating many of those students will return post Covid, and we will need to bring them back in, but our state budgeting numbers for funding will be based on the lower number. Colleen said this year we had 55 homeschoolers, normally it is around 20+. Alannah asked if they knew how much money that difference in students represented in Chapter 70 funds to the schools, but staff did not know. Kelly asked how the preschool extended to 5 day was shown in the budget.

Jillian asked when the feasibility study was expected and Lydia believes it is 2 to 3 years out.

Budget Updates

Greg attended the Massachusetts Municipal Association conference. They gave an indication that local aid may be increased, but we do not know how much, and there may also be an increase in assessments. Our health insurance provider still does not have final numbers for us. Tom asked about mitigation funding as Greg mentioned in his budget document. Greg clarified those are not things we can base our budget on, though they are important to keep in mind. The new Treasurer/Collector is starting this coming week. They are interviewing for a new Town Accountant.

Ken asked what is planned for the Joint Budget Meeting. Greg plans to present on the status of the FY21 budget and his proposed FY22 budget. Ken explained that the FinCom may not have a set budget message presentation as we had last year.

Next meeting

Finalize what we will put forward at joining meeting

Kelly started a discussion about the marijuana zoning questions brought forth at the Select Board meeting. Ken filled in some history on the Fincom's decision last year.

Alannah added that the School Committee meeting started before our member updates, and gave an update regarding the CPC. She recommended Fincom members take a look at what is being proposed for this year and gave the total amounts.

Ken then asked for Budget Subcommittee meeting notes. Jillian said a lot of the discussion was reflected tonight with the SC meeting. Alannah added that Brian clarified the 265K budget shortfall in the school's budget last year has been taken care of via CARES Act and grant monies. There were no cuts in services incurred.

Ken told Greg he would get our two names for the the Charter Review Committee

Tom motion to adjourn, Elliot Second, 7-0 vote to adjourn at 9:33pm.

FinCom Reserve FY21

Approved at Town Meeting, Article 13: \$250,000.00

Potential Reserve Fund transfers; approved by BOS:

Police Sal - Sick Leave Buyback	35,908.00
Police Sal - Sick Leave Buyback	16,699.00
Fire Sal - Sick Leave Buyback	33,562.56